

## **SB 1451 Will Require Representation on Emergency Management**

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SB 1451, authored by Sen. Christine Kehoe (D-San Diego) and signed by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2006, will require the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) to ensure representation of the disabled community on all relevant Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) specialist committees. OES Director, Henry Renteria, is required to appoint representatives of the disabled community to serve on the evacuation, sheltering, communication, recovery and other SEMS committees. Persons with visual impairment, sensory or cognitive and physical disabilities will be selected statewide.

The bill was inspired in part by the results obtained from the emergencies of September 11, 2001 as well as Hurricane Katrina, which underscored the necessity for government to develop more comprehensive procedures for disaster preparedness plans, procedures and accessible information to serve the unique needs of the disabled community.

Mr. Renteria is also required to present recommendations to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2009, regarding preparedness, planning and procedures. As well, brochures should contain the information on such matters in accessible formats. The bill also requires that Renteria and the State Fire Marshall's office seek funds to assist in the development of new technologies and information systems that will help in the evacuation of people with disabilities.